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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: GREEK AMBASSADOR SLATED FOR RECALL OVER FT REMARKS

Classified By: CHARGE TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (U) Greek media has given predictably overheated coverage to statements by Greek Ambassador to Skopje Dora Grosomanidou in July 5's Financial Times. In the FT article, Grosomanidou is quoted as saying that "Formally, there is no problem for Skopje to become a member of NATO or the EU under the name it has been registered at the UN." However, Grosomanidou added that a solution on the name "would be desirable beforehand." According to FT, she also stated that "Greece has to face the new reality, as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been recognized under its constitutional name by more than half of the members of the United Nations." Greek media argued that Grosomanidou's remarks diverged from official GOG policy.

12. (U) Grosomanidou's remarks added fuel to the on-going debate -- in press as well as political circles -- over whether the GOG should back away from the Interim Agreement of 1995 and veto Macedonia's NATO accession unless the name issue is resolved beforehand. One newspaper, Ethnos, claimed Grosomanidou's remarks showed that MFA officials did not believe that PM Karamanlis would veto Macedonia's NATO accession. A July 8 article in To Proto Thema suggested that some of FM Bakoyannis' associates would like to "forget the name issue," juxtaposing her approach with Karamanlis' tougher stance.

13. (C) The back story is more nuanced. In a meeting with Charge July 9, MFA Secretary General Rocanas admitted -- with apparent regret -- that Grosomanidou would have to be recalled. Most of her statements were presented out of context. However, because FT's questions were submitted in writing, Grosomanidou had every opportunity to clear her answers in advance with the MFA, and should have done so. According to Rocanas, there were only a very few changes the MFA would have recommended. Charge underscored that this reaction would not help our efforts to keep rhetoric in both capitals low-key, particularly as the Greek elections approach. Rocanas acknowledged as much, but foresaw no other political option.

14. (C) COMMENT: Grosomanidou's recall was politically expedient. With elections coming, and polls putting the two major parties within one percentage point of each other, the New Democracy government is determined not to lose votes in notionalist LAOS party. Also played into the ha. emphasize political di`koy annis and PM KaramanliQrecall may play well tot adds to our concern Qtselself in, leaving itselible negotiating room on this key issue.

COUNTRYMAN